

Safety ...Off The Job

Boating Safety

Heading out on the water to take in some boating or sailing has to be one of the finest ways to spend a summer afternoon. It's relaxing, enjoyable, and gives you a chance to "get away from it all".

But don't let your fine afternoon become a search and rescue case. Ensure your water skills are fine tuned.

Here are a few pointers to help you steer clear of an accident this summer.

- All pleasure craft, including sailboats, rowboats and canoes must carry certain equipment in good operating order. There must be one approved personal flotation device (PFD) for each person on board, two oars or paddles, a bailer, a whistle, and a fire extinguisher (if craft has inboard motor or fixed fuel tank or is equipped with interior cooking or heating appliances). Other recommended equipment
- includes an anchor with rope, first aid kit, towline or throwing device. Navigation lights, horns and bells must comply with collision regulations. Check with regulations in your area to see what is needed for the size of boat you operate.
- Half of all boating accidents are alcohol related. Alcohol slows the reflexes, impairs vision and affects balance and co-ordination. Not only is it a dangerous practice, it's also against the law.
- Overloading and overpowering a boat can cause it to capsize or overturn. Maximum capacities are shown on the capacity plate. For safety's sake don't exceed these limits.
- Approximately 80 percent of the people who drown in boating accidents were not wearing a lifejacket. An approved lifejacket or personal flotation device must be available for each person on
- board. Children and weak swimmers are strongly recommended to wear theirs at all times; others should wear them when water conditions warrant.
- Leave word with someone on shore where you plan to go and your expected time of return. Head for shore immediately if a storm threatens.
- Take a boating course and, if possible, join a boat club to keep up to date with changes in regulations and other safe boating information.

Safe boating is a wonderful way to enjoy the warm weather. Be a confident and knowledgeable skipper. Your life and the lives of your passengers depend on it.

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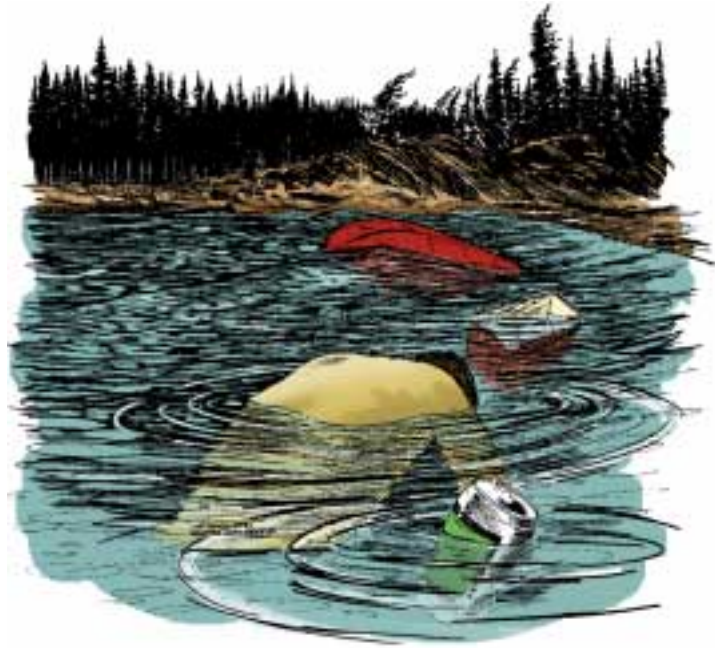
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